the assessment studies to know the extent and the full potential of the gas deposits.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Natural gas deal with Iran

2355. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the matter relating to the implementation of $ 22 billion liquefied natural gas deal, was discussed with Iranian Government during his recent visit to that country; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) No, Sir. Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas has not visited Iran, recently.

(b) Does not arise.

Dependence of Navratna oil companies on foreign assistance

†2356. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many oil companies with Navratna status in the country are dependent on the assistance of foreign companies for production of crude oil and natural gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the names of these domestic companies;

(c) whether it is also a fact that these domestic companies are earning annual dividend regularly for the last few years; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the reasons for dependency of these companies on the foreign assistance?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) No, Sir. Inhouse capabilities are available with public sector oil companies for inducting advanced technologies in oil servicing operations. However, in certain areas, equipment/services and domain experts are also being hired from outside agencies including foreign companies wherever possible and whenever required to enhance production from the wells.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Yes, Sir. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) a Navratna company has been earning annual dividend regularly for the last few years.

(d) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Blocks allotted under NELP

†2357. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that under New Exploration and Licensing Policy several blocks have been allotted to private and public institutes in several rounds;

(b) if so, the total number of blocks allotted till February, 2007 and the estimated reservoir of crude oil and gas therein;

(c) whether at the time of allotment any tentative time-limit has been fixed for these blocks regarding the commencement of productions;

(d) if so, number of blocks from where production could not start within the fixed time-limit; and

(e) the names of allottee institutes which have been found guilty for it?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.